



THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA MINERAL CLUB INC



Crystals are the flowers of the Mineral Kingdom



THE MINERAL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 51 No. 5

JUNE 2010

Masters of Mineral Illustration

NVMC Schedule:

26 June Field trip to Manassas Quarry

28 June General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm - this is the last meeting before the summer break.

03 July Field Trip fossil hunt (road cuts)

NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST

27 Sept. General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm

25 Oct. General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm

Join us on June 28th (our last meeting of the "season") as we learn from Bruce Gaber about the history of mineral illustration from the 15th century to the present. This is colorful, entertaining, and educational program was first shown at the national meeting of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators, and then at the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. Time permitting, Bruce will also show a couple of short videos based on his recent photography. All club members are also invited to attend a dinner with our speaker (you must pay for your own meal, though) at:

Rock Bottom Brewery Restaurant
Ballston Mall
4238 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22203

This is located at the intersection of N. Carlin Springs Rd and N. Glebe Rd, and there is a parking garage entrance right at this intersection.

Please RSVP to Sue Marcus if you plan to attend the dinner prior to the meeting, at rlhaskins@verizon.net

Upcoming Field Trips

By Ted Carver,
Intrepid Field Trip Chairman

Hi ho all!

We have 2 upcoming trips - Saturday June 26th at 7:00 am at Vulcan in Manassas and Saturday July 3rd at 8:00 am for fossiling in Western VA and West Virginia.

Firstly - this: MNCA field trip June 26, 2010 (via Eric Thompson)

"Our micro-mineral club - Micromineralogists of the National Capitol Area - has a field trip opportunity for the Vulcan Materials Quarry in Manassas, VA on the 26th of June 2010. We have a small group of regulars for field trips, and would like to invite you folks in addition so as to get the 'minimum 10' in order to not be turned away at the gate."

Please, however, contact Ted about this one. All standard safety requirements for this trip. If you need directions - I

don't want to sound dismissive, but - Google it.

There's good stuff in them thar pits, so if you haven't been there recently...

Secondly - this: July 3rd

We'll meet at the Gainesville VA Starbucks (Atlas Way) at 8:00 and figure where to go from there. So many fossils to choose from! Personally, I want trilobites. All standard safety requirements for this one, too. Additionally, wear bright colors - preferably those that can be easily seen from space - as these will be road cuts and we have a zero tolerance squishing policy. All questions, even obscure modernist philosophical ones, will be answered at the Starbucks - again, Google it.

So, you in?

Ted Carver
571.344.4958

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May Meeting Minutes

By Kathy Hrechka, Secretary

May 24, 2010 Minutes NVMC

President, Barry Remer called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m.

No past Presidents were in attendance.

Treasurer, Rick Reiber reported the balance of the club treasury \$7,862.39.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved as published in the April newsletter.

Old Business: Jim Kostka relayed a message of gratitude from John & Barbara Wells who recently moved to UP Michigan.

New Business: Show Chair, Tom Taaffe spoke about

the rising rental costs of GMU for our club show scheduled for November 20-21, 2010. Julia Nord was in attendance, and ensured club members that she would negotiate with GMU on our behalf for the best rate. The board will meet with Julia to discuss further club show details.

George Reimher announced some give away minerals from the Manassas Quarry.

Door prizes were handed out, and meeting was adjourned. Refreshments were served before program began.

Program: Copper, Bentonite and Brutality. Geologist Erich Junger, Ph.D, of the Department of Homeland Security spoke about the successful application of Forensic Geology in crime solving.

The Prez Says

Here are a few safety thoughts for summer rock collectors.

Collecting in quarries adds great specimens for your collection. The walls of quarries makes them natural heat and glare collectors. Be sure to bring lots of liquids with you when you collect. Also, wear lots of sunscreen to reduce skin damage and wear a pair of sunglasses. Overexposure to sunlight can lead to Cataracts.

When collecting at roadcuts or in the woods and you want to see the underside of a rock that might have that beautiful specimen you want for your collection, pick up the rock at the top away from you. This enables any creatures hiding under the rock to scurry away from you rather than at you. I like wildlife too, but some do bite when scared. Also, check for ticks and if bitten check with your own Doctor. Two weeks of antibiotics can keep you from Lyme disease.

Lastly, be safe this summer as we want to see you in September and the new specimens you collected.

Warm regards to all,
Barry Remer, NVMC President

June Meeting Agenda

No meeting agenda was submitted in time for publication.

Tip: Freeze that Tick!

Did you find a tick on yourself after coming home from a field trip? Are you worried you may get sick? Many doctors recommend placing that tick in a bag and then placing the bag in the freezer for 2-3 weeks. If you develop any kind of illness within that time, see your doctor, and take the tick with you for analysis.



Poison Ivy - Avoid Leaves of Three!

While rockhounding (minerals or fossils) in some locations, there can be considerable overgrowth and often poison ivy can be found. Remember the rule - leaves of three, let it be! Some people are not susceptible to poison ivy, but most people are and even people who aren't will eventually be sensitive to it after repeated exposure. So just avoid it!

Mineral Study boxes to Boy Scout Camp

Goshen, Virginia

We recently put together 5 identical mineral study boxes to be used at the Boy & Cub Scout summer camps at Goshen, Virginia. Jim Kostka received the request, and made the delivery connection. Jim has also collected a massive amount of large rocks to donate. In order to give credit to our club, I adhered a sticker with our club name and website to each box. With 5 camps around the lake, each camp will receive one mineral box, and an assortment of hand specimens.

The Boy Scouts of America has replied with a "Thank-You"

Eric, Camp Director at Camp Sneider in Haymarket, would like to solicit our club to teach geology (Webelos Requirement or Geology Belt loop) throughout / sometimes - this summer.

Sharing our geology talents, Kathy Hrechka & Jim Kostka

Photos by the authors

Donations Needed: Minerals for study

Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria is adding Earth Sciences to their ninth grade curriculum this fall. If you have any quality study specimens which you would like to donate, please contact Kathy Hrechka kshrechka@msn.com or leave them in the nature center closet with a label for BI. It is likely they would appreciate igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary classifications.

Minerals in the Headlines

A couple of recent stories pertaining to minerals have made headlines. One of the biggest stories is the recent report by the USGS regarding the untapped potential mineral wealth in Afghanistan. Potentially upwards of \$1 trillion in minerals in this war-torn country could help change the future of investment and therefore provide means for locals to find work rather than turn to insurgency for income. This will surely be an interesting story to unfold for years to come.



Jim K getting organized - sorting out 6 collections for Boy Scouts and marking names on specimens. The milk crates doubled in contents by the time it was done - Thanks to Chris at EasyStone in Vienna

Another story pertains to blood diamonds in Zimbabwe, as a new, high concentration of diamonds has been found in the country, according to the New York Times. Although the majority of the diamonds appear to be of only industrial quality, this will be another story to follow in the coming months as it plays into the political situation and whether democracy can develop. Will this new mineral wealth help or hinder the plight of the people of Zimbabwe?

Confessions of a New Glowhound!

Photo and article by Patricia Rehill

It's 9am on a cool spring morning, April 24, 2010. I'm about one hour northwest of New York City, in the small town of Ogdensburg, New Jersey. It's still early spring here. There's a misty fog on the hills that's just burning off. The town is cradled in the Delaware Valley Water Shed Region. It's a moderately mountainous area with nearby ski resorts, farms, and a beautiful small town appeal.

I've entered the historic gates of the Sterling Hill Mine. I've just parked and gathered my gear. I can't believe that I'm not running full throttle to the check-in point of the 2010 Super Dig. I want to start grabbing every fluorescent rock I can find. I put my orange bucket onto my rolling cart. This is the most essential device for a day of mineral collecting.

I check in with the Delaware Valley Earth Science Society members and North East Field Trip Alliance, who have sponsored this event with the Sterling Hill Mine & Museum. They point me to the piles of rare fluorescent minerals flanking a path. Rocks of every size await their trip to the UV shed. Here, in complete darkness, I put them under a short wave ultraviolet light (SWUV). They fluoresce different colors, which helps me identify the mineral mix: Calcite-red/orange, Willemite crystals-yellow/green, Hydrozincite-blue, Wollastonite-yellow/orange. Zincite has an orange/red color in daylight, does not fluoresce. Franklinite- black crystals do not fluoresce.

People are filing into the shed with their finds. Kids are finding the best specimens. Each mineral specimen is unique. The fluorescent mineral combinations are a wild show under these lights. It's brilliant. Everything I had anticipated since hearing about this event last year.



Linda, Bill Chapman and Bill

It's 10 am at the rock pile and time to listen to the "New Glowhound" orientation. They kindly do a "show and tell" about the minerals that we are there to dig. It's easy to get addicted to the beauty of these awesome color combinations. Several people are wearing "Spin Art" Day-Glo T-shirts. One woman sports a wild fluorescent-like blazer.

At 11am, I can't believe I'm pausing my collecting to take the 1 ½ hour Lower Mine and Museum tour. In the museum, our guide amazes us with the history of the previously named, New Jersey Zinc Company, and it's miners. We gain respect for the roll they played during World War II. The Zinc Ore was blasted from as deep as one mile below. The mine's railroad spur provided easy transportation to Pennsylvania where it was combined with copper to produce the brass for bullets and for all forms of military ordinance.

The mine had been operating from 1913 and features buildings from different periods of growth until it ceased operation in 1986. In 1989, Richard and Robert Hauck, brothers, set out to preserve the legacy of Sterling Hill and make the site accessible to the public as a mining museum. To read more about the rich history of this mine go to:

<http://www.sterlinghillminingmuseum.org>

The mine tour was the highlight. We finished the tour with a blackout demonstration in the Rainbow Room. In cave darkness we all picked a rock and held it up to the SWUV ultraviolet lights to reveal the various fluorescent mineral content. Lot's of ohs and ahs! What an education.

After that, I headed to the mine's Passaic Pit, with new friends from the mine tour,

Confessions of a New Glowhound!

Continued from page 4

Bill Chapman, Linda and another new Glowhound named, Bill. We combined our tools and efforts to search out the coveted Hydrozincite, which fluoresces blue under a SWUV light.

We asked each hound what they were finding. Soon we were pointed towards the "Mother Rock", a large boulder containing Hydrozincite. Bill Chapman had his "Way Too Cool" brand SWUV light with battery pack. I had my small SWUV wand. We set up our own small viewing area under a shady rock and created darkness with our jackets. We began viewing our finds, as Bill chipped away at the boulder. In the end, my rolling cart helped us bring out hundreds of pounds of fluorescent minerals from our Dig. At \$1.50 lb., we were only too happy to pay for our finds. It was now 5:30pm. I headed back to my hotel for dinner.

At 8:30pm, in complete darkness, Sterling Hill Mine presented the Illumination of "The Pillar of Light" show. Imagine, walking on the same path, but now, in complete darkness; a minefield of fluorescent rocks to your left and right or in front. You walk to the rear of the grounds, to the same pits, hoping not to fall down (ok, I am the only one shining a flashlight at the path-geek). The staff has a huge SWUV light with generator illuminating the face of a cliff. You make out the illusion of a horse's head with the

fluorescent minerals breaking out of the cliff. The staff points to various rocks with their hand held SWUV lights, more ohs and ahs.

You are allowed to Dig here this night for this special event. I hear pick axes off in the dark distance. Not for me. Novices, without lights or a clue, are walking around and screaming with delight as they see these minerals fluoresce at night. I turn to my new friends in the parking lot as we are packing up and say, "Hey, we aren't just Rockhounds, anymore, we're Glowhounds". I wish I had a merit badge for that!

Warning: Once you go you will want to return, many times. Enjoy! .

If you go-Details: Sterling Hill Mine & Museum, Ogdensburg, NJ

Phone: 973-209-7212

Website:

<http://www.Sterlinghillminingmuseum.org>

Length of Trip from Burke, Va.-4.5 hours, read directions first-use Rand McNally driving directions, not MapQuest.

Also check out Franklin Mine, nearby.

Quarry Walls, BEWARE

By Robert Winsor

It is important for all rockhounds to remember the most important aspect of collecting in the pits, and that's mine safety. It is highly recommended that any person who regularly goes into mines or quarries to attend General Mineral Miner certification (contact the Editor for more information). This day-long class will cover the many important aspects of safety in mines and quarries. Some of the material covers safety related to blasting, which may not be much use to most of us. However, the bulk of the day is spent understanding the safety issues with the walls, decks, benches, etc. Most rockhounds know that they should stay away from the walls, but for some reason, it appears that at virtually every field trip,

someone gets too close. It may be easy to think that if a rock wall can support a quarter of a million pound truck, then why can't it support the rocks at the edge? Well, those rocks up the wall are ALL loosely held in place, and it is BECAUSE of the blasting and the quarter million pound trucks (they make the ground rumble), that the rocks on the wall work a bit more loose each day. A person never knows when they are going to give way, and when they do, a person is likely not to hear anything at all....until (if they are lucky enough to live through it), the rock hits the bottom.

So, if or when you hear about other people collecting at the wall, speak up! **It is not right to collect near a wall**, so speak out against it! This is important for safety and the continuation of our hobby.

If you are unsure what regions are unsafe in the mine, ALWAYS ask the manager of the mine!

Geology Trip to James Madison University

Pictures and article by Kathy Hrechka

Dr. Lance Kearns, Professor, & Curator of the Mineral Museum at JMU gave our geology club members a first class tour of the museum and geology lab on 2/ 20/10.

This year, over twenty club members enjoyed Dr. Kearns's presentations. Clubs represented include: NVMC, MNCA, GMH, MSDC, BMS, and Micromineralogists of New England. John Ebner and Freddie Stohl traveled the farthest from New Jersey to represent their club, MNE. Friends and fellowship were highlights of the morning.

We were given a special tour of the new geology museum, which showcases over 530 spectacular and rare minerals. Dr. Kearns also tested unidentified minerals in his scanning electron microscope. We dined on gourmet pizza for lunch, and had a chance to visit with Cindy, Dr. Kearns's wife.

We were honored to meet Bethany Meier, the junior geology major who recently received a grant from the NVMC Fred Schaefermeyer Scholarship Fund. Bethany is a resident of Round Hill, Virginia. At the age of seven she remembers finding



her first rock, an amethyst geode in her backyard, which sparked her interest in geology.

Bethany's earth science teacher in ninth grade at Harmony Intermediate, Virginia solidified her geological interest when he brought minerals into the classroom to study.

Last year, she attended the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium for the first time, and purchased her first cabinet specimen of galena. Thanks to the scholarship funds, she is affording to attend the symposium again this year, along with researching apophyllite. Her research focuses on determining the amount of fluoride concentration in apophyllite. Once Bethany concludes her research, she will present it to our club.

After graduating with a Bachelors of Science in Geology next year, and a Masters in Education from JMU, Bethany hopes to continue her education at UH Manoa (Oahu, Hawaii), UC Berkeley, or Virginia Tech.

To view JMU Geology website, go to:

<http://csm.jmu.edu/minerals>



New email address for the Newsletter Editor

Over the course of the last several months, there have been some members no longer receiving the newsletter despite being on the distribution list. To fix this

problem, the official contact email for the newsletter has now been changed to **news.nvmc@gmail.com**. This email address should solve all the problems. So, please take notice of the new email address and update your records as such.

2010 PALEONTOLOGY FIELD TRIPS

July 5-9: Paleo Camp for Kids! (Ages 7-17)

\$650/double occupancy

We will stay at Stratford Hall, home of the Lees of Virginia. We will collect from Aquia Creek (upriver); Popes Creek (MD) area, and Westmoreland Cliffs. Formations include the Aquia (60 my), Nanjemoy (50 my), Calvert (14 my), Choptank (12 my), Eastover (9 my).

July 10: Pamunkey River Boat Trip (Limit 16)

VMNH Member, \$90; Non-Member, \$100

July 11: Stratford Hall

VMNH Member, \$27.00; Non-Member, \$30

Children under 12, Member, \$22.50; Non-Member, \$25

We will leave Westmoreland State Park at 8:00 a.m., caravan to the Pamunkey (about 1 hour) and boat the river until 4:30 p.m. We will collect shells, bone, teeth from the Nanjemoy (L. Eocene—50 my), Piney Point (M. Eocene—45 my), Old Church (U. Oligocene—25 my), Calvert (18-14 my), and Eastover (8-7 my) Formations. We return to Westmoreland State Park and on Sunday (July 12) we will explore the shoreline at Stratford Hall by boat or by foot. We leave Stratford Hall at 2:00 p.m.

July 17: Upper Potomac Boat Trip (Limit 16)

VMNH Member, \$99; Non-Member, \$110

We will leave Westmoreland State Park at 8:00 a.m., caravan to the Upper Potomac, and boat the river until 4:30 p.m. We will collect shells, bone, teeth from the Aquia (60 my) and Nanjemoy (L. Eocene—50 my) Formations and return to Westmoreland State Park at 5:00 p.m.

July 18: Stratford Hall

VMNH Member, \$27; Non-Member, \$30

Children under 12, \$22.50; Non-Member, \$25

Stratford Hall \$5/ea grounds fee which can be applied to dining at the Stratford Hall Restaurant or Gift Shop

We meet at Westmoreland State Park at 9:00 a.m., convoy to Stratford Hall, and boat the Stratford Hall Cliffs until 2:00 p.m. We will collect shells, bone, teeth, etc. from the Calvert, Choptank, St. Marys, and Eastover Formations.

July 24: Lower James Boat Trip (Limit 16)

VMNH Member, \$90; Non-Member, \$100

Meet at the Jamestown Yacht Club at 8:30 a.m. June 19 and boat the James River on the Surry County side for about 15 miles. We will collect from massive outcrops of marine formations containing millions of shells, barnacles, corals, bone, teeth, etc. of Miocene and Pliocene Age. We stay at the Hampton Inn-Chester.

July 25: Meherrin (Limit 26)

VMNH Member, \$45; Non-Member, \$50

We will collect by boat from the Eastover and Yorktown Formations long the Meherrin River at Murfreesboro, NC. Boats put in at the Route 258 bridge.

August 23-27: Paleo Camp for Adults!

\$650/double, \$900/single occupancy/week

\$165/day/double; \$230/day/single/overnight

\$85/day (lunch provided by Stratford Hall)

\$75/day (lunch on your own)

We will stay at Stratford Hall, home of the Lees of Virginia. We will collect from Aquia Creek (upriver); Popes Creek (MD) area, and Westmoreland Cliffs. Formations include the Aquia (60 my), Nanjemoy (50 my), Calvert (14 my), Choptank (12 my), Eastover (9 my).

August 28: Calvert County Cliffs and Chesapeake Bay Boat Trip (Limit 16)

(Depending upon weather conditions)

VMNH Member, \$90; Non-Member, \$100

Staying at the Holiday Inn Express in Prince Frederick, we will launch boats at the Chesapeake Beach at 9:00 a.m. and collect shells, bone, teeth of the Calvert (17 my) and Choptank (12 my) Formations along the beaches and cliffs of the famous Calvert Cliffs for about 15 miles. We return to Chesapeake Beach at 4:30 p.m. (In case of windy weather we will move to the Patuxent River.)

August 29: Pope's Creek/Potomac Boat Trip (Limit 16)

VMNH Member, \$45.50; Non-Member, \$50

The group will put in at the 301 bridge near Pope's Creek and boat the river on the Maryland side for about 8 miles. We collect shells, bone, and teeth from lower Eocene (50 mya), lower Miocene (18 mya).

Sept. 11: Stratford Hall/Westmoreland Boat Trip (Limit 16) 8:00-4:00 p.m.

VMNH Member, \$76.50; Non-Member, \$85

Stratford Hall \$5/ea grounds fee which can be applied to dining at the Stratford Hall Dining Room or Gift Shop

Take a trip along the spectacular cliffs of the Potomac River, in an area rich in paleontology, ecology, and history. The 140-foot high cliffs expose sediment ranging for 3.5 million to 14 million years old, and have produced fossils of whales, seals, crocodiles, sharks, and numerous seashells. Explore the scenic beauty at Westmoreland State Park and the historic structures and museum at Stratford Hall. Accommodations and park fees are not included. A campground is available at Westmoreland State Park and hotels in Montross and Colonial Beach. Bring your own lunch, a trowel, plastic bags, and a bucket. Dress to wade and get dirty. Access is moderate, with some walking required, and getting wet is likely. No restrooms.

Sept. 12: Stratford Hall/Westmoreland 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

VMNH Member, \$31.50; Non-Member, \$35

Children under 12, \$22.50; Non-Member, \$25

Stratford Hall \$5/ea grounds fee which can be applied to dining at the Stratford Hall Dining Room or Gift Shop

Meet at Westmoreland State Park at 9:00 a.m., convoy to Stratford Hall, and boat the Stratford Hall Cliffs to collect shells, bone, teeth, etc. from the Calvert, Choptank, St. Marys, and Eastover Formations.

For any of these trips, contact: Janet Roetken

276.634.4171

janet.roetken @ vmnh.virginia.gov



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PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
[HTTP://www.novamineralclub.org](http://www.novamineralclub.org)

The Northern Virginia Mineral Club

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Visitors are Always Welcome at our Club Meetings.

Go on Field Trips
Take Pictures
Collect Memories
Share with us your experiences when we re-convene in the Fall

Have a nice summer!

Purpose: To promote, educate and encourage interest in geology, mineralogy, lapidary arts and related sciences. The society is a member of Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS) <http://www.amfed.org/efmls> and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) <http://www.amfed.org>.

Dues: Due by 1 January of each year; \$15.00 Individual, \$20.00 Family, and \$6.00 Junior (under 16, sponsored by an adult member).

Meetings are held at 7:45 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month (except

May and December*) at **Long Branch Nature Center**, 625 Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204. Phone (703) 228-6535. (No meeting in July & August.)

(*Changes announced in the newsletter.) Snow schedule - Arlington county schools.